DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 322 334 CE 055 430

TITLE	Vocational Education Success Stories: Serving Special Populations.
INSTITUTION	Illinois State Council on Vocational Education, Springfield.
PUB DATE	86
NOTE	39p.; For related documents, see CE 055 428-429. Photographs will not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Career Education; College Programs; Community Programs; Dropout Programs; *Educationally Disadvantaged; Employment Potential; Engineering; High Achievement; Job Skills; Nontraditional Occupations; Nursing Education; Postsecondary Education; Program Descriptions; *Program Effectiveness; *Program Implementation; Secondary Education; Special Education; *Special Needs Students; State Programs; *Success; *Vocational Education; Welding
IDENTIFIERS	*Illinois

ABSTRACT

This publication reports on the Illinois Council on Vocational Education's (ICoVE) recognition program. The program was designed to (1) commend achievement in vocational education; (2) collect information about vocational education and evaluate its success; (3) provide a resource guide of successful vocational education programs and activities; (4) assist the council in partial fulfillment of its responsibilities; and (5) report ICoVE's recommendations to the Governor and the State Board of Education. The publication profiles 10 vocational education programs that have been especially successful in serving special populations. Included in the stories are programs for nursing assistant training, a food service program for students with developmental disabilities, programs for school dropouts, welding technology, a college special services center, truck driver training, vocational education for former special education students, exploring engineering for females and minorities, and a community classroom project. The document includes statistics on Illinois targeted programs; explanation of the criteria for program selections; and findings, conclusions, and recommendations, in addition to the project descriptions. (KC)

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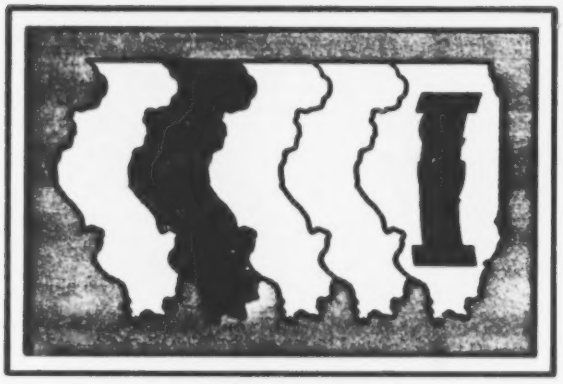

COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Documents in the Vocational Education Success Stories Series Include:

Community Partnerships
Individual Roles
Benefiting Students
Serving Special Populations

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Vocational Education Success Stories:

SERVING SPECIAL POPULATIONS 1986

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of the
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1986

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To the Reader

This publication is one in a series of four prepared to report ICoVE's Recognition Program. The ICoVE Recognition Program was designed to serve the following five purposes:

Purpose 1. Commend accomplishment and achievement in vocational education. Although much has been said in recent years about what is wrong with education, some *good* things are happening in our schools and these should be brought to the attention of the citizens of Illinois. Encouragement through recognition may increase efforts to strive for excellence.

Purpose 2. Collect information about vocational education and evaluate its success. Questionnaires were completed by nominees for special recognition. Responses provided ICoVE with information about how participation in vocational education had been beneficial to the individuals, their work place, students, and the vocational education programs. Responses revealed how those outside the vocational education community had become interested in getting involved with vocational education programs. Characteristics of successful programs were identified. Information was collected about people from all walks of life who were working together to help educate Illinoisans for employment. Participants gave ICoVE suggestions about how to maintain quality vocational education programs and assist those needing improvement.

Purpose 3. Provide a resource guide of successful vocational education programs and activities. ICoVE encourages the use of this publication as a resource for model programs and activities for replication by others. Vocational educators have always been willing to share information to help others. Each success story includes the name and address of someone who can provide more information about the described program.

Purpose 4. Assist ICoVE in partial fulfillment of its mandated responsibilities. Information collected for the ICoVE Recognition Program was merged with other information and data to draw conclusions and make recommendations mandated by legislation. Mandated responsibilities this project helps to fulfill include:

- Report on policies needed to strengthen vocational education programs, particularly for the handicapped;
- Advise on how the private sector can help to modernize vocational education programs;
- Report on the availability of activities and services;
- Recommend how business and labor concerns can be used;
- Assess use of federal funds to support vocational education programs;
- Recommend how the public can be involved in providing vocational education;
- Report on equal access to quality vocational education programs for target populations;
- Evaluate coordination between vocational education and JTPA.

Purpose 5. Report ICoVE's recommendations to the Governor, Illinois State Board of Education, General Assembly, private sector, general public, vocational educators, parents, job training community, students, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Labor. This series of Vocational Education Success Stories contains findings, conclusions, and recommendations, in addition to "success stories." This information is provided to satisfy the mandate to report and present recommendations to the above audiences.

Vocational Education Services for Targeted Populations

An increasing number of individuals in our society who need special services to be successful participants of the labor force, coupled with increased emphasis from federal legislation for vocational education to serve targeted populations, have focused attention of both ICoVE and the vocational education community on targeted populations.

Approximately 32 percent of the vocational education enrollment clearly represent targeted populations who need special services. Forty-eight percent of vocational education's federal funds are specified to serve target groups. The number of persons representing targeted populations who are mainstreamed and not in need of special or extra services is unknown.

Who are the targeted populations to be served? They include:

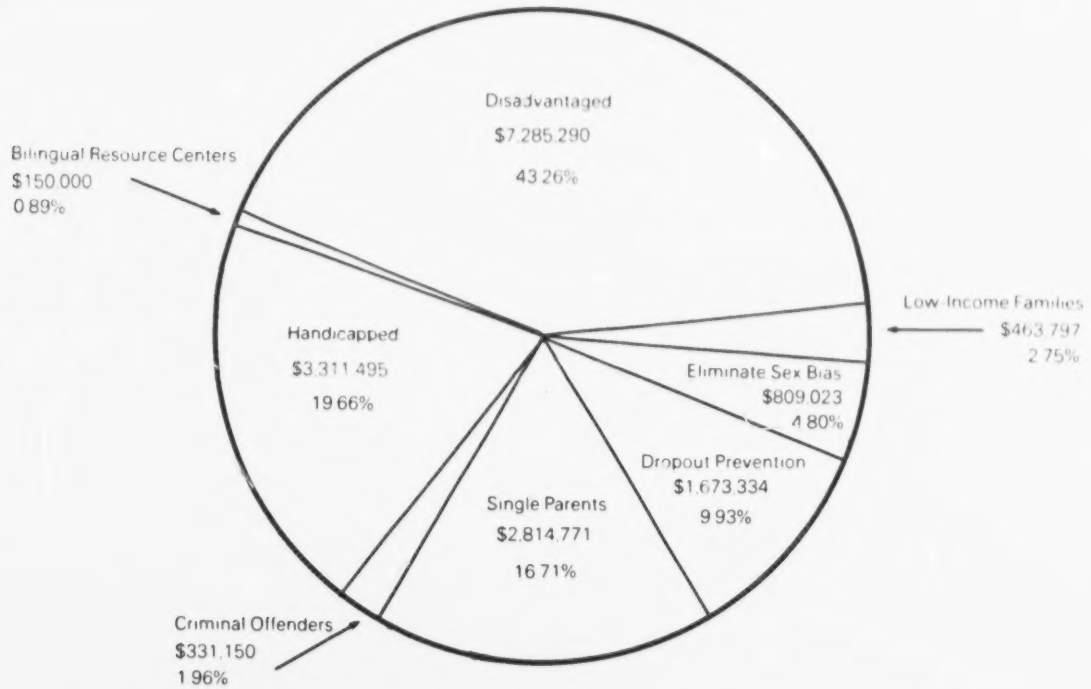
handicapped,
economically disadvantaged,
academically disadvantaged,
members of economically disadvantaged families,
individuals with limited-English proficiency,
single parents,
displaced homemakers,
teenaged parents,
migrants,
dropouts,
potential dropouts,
criminal offenders,
individuals seeking nontraditional job roles,
women,
racial and ethnic minorities,
youth,
dislocated workers, and
adults in need of retraining and upgrading.

Why are these populations targeted? Historically, individuals having the characteristics of these population groups have been most likely to drop out of school, be unemployed, be unable to re-enter the work force, be underemployed, or be unable to advance in the workplace as technology required. They have become known as "at-risk" populations because they risk unemployment and social dependence.

Use of Funds for Targeted Populations

The following chart illustrates how federal funds designated to serve targeted populations are distributed to serve specific "at-risk" groups. Only federal vocational education funds are used for these purposes.

Funds represented in the chart include funds used to provide special services to individuals in targeted groups, including statewide curriculum development, inservice education, special center operations, research, and other developmental activities.



Need for Special Services

Many factors contribute to a student's (whether youth or adult) inability to successfully prepare for employment. These factors may include poor academic achievement or ability; inability to comprehend and communicate in the English language; physical, mental, or emotional handicap; economic constraints requiring employment in lieu of education; or family responsibilities. If remedial provisions are not made, the result is often that the individual will drop out, be unemployed, or be underemployed. These situations often result in economic dependence on society.

ICoVE Assessment Reveals Special Initiatives

The Targeted Populations Committee reviewed a variety of data related to activities and services available to "at-risk" or targeted populations. In addition, ICoVE assessed the vocational education programs and services focusing attention on specific groups of these at-risk students through committees: Corrections Committee, Dropouts Committee, Hispanic Concerns Committee, and JTPA Committee.

Special Initiatives

ICoVE's review of Illinois' special programs, services, and activities revealed that a variety of initiatives have been launched to assist special needs students in vocational education. Examples of such initiatives include:

- Parenting programs for teen parents
- Dropout prevention programs for at-risk students
- Special programs to enhance academic skills such as math, language arts, science, communication
- Tutorial services for students needing special help
- Guidance and counseling services for special needs students
- Career and job opportunity information
- Child care services and transportation
- Special teaching materials to accommodate language barriers
- Class-sized programs to encourage nontraditional job preparation
- Equipment to accommodate handicapped
- Competency-based curriculum for individualizing instruction
- Pilot programs to test "promising practices" for serving students with special needs
- Employability skill development classes to improve job-seeking and job-keeping skills
- "Stop out" programs to help dropouts, displaced homemakers, dislocated workers, and others return to education after long periods of absence
- Special centers for support services to target groups such as women, persons with limited-English-speaking ability, handicapped, single parents, teen parents, and others
- Preparation as entrepreneurs
- Self-esteem and management seminars
- Development and design of instructional materials having specific application to the needs of target populations
- In-service education for teachers who work with students having special needs
- Research to determine what target population students need to be successfully prepared for employment
- Partnerships with the private sector for providing hands-on experiences in the workplace for at-risk students

Vocational Education Participation of Target Populations

Targeted populations or "at-risk students comprise 31.57 percent of the enrollment in vocational education programs. Only those students who receive special services (such as those listed above) to help them to overcome or accommodate their disadvantaged or handicapping condition are included in this count. Students needing and receiving special assistance are enrolled at all levels—secondary, postsecondary, and adult.

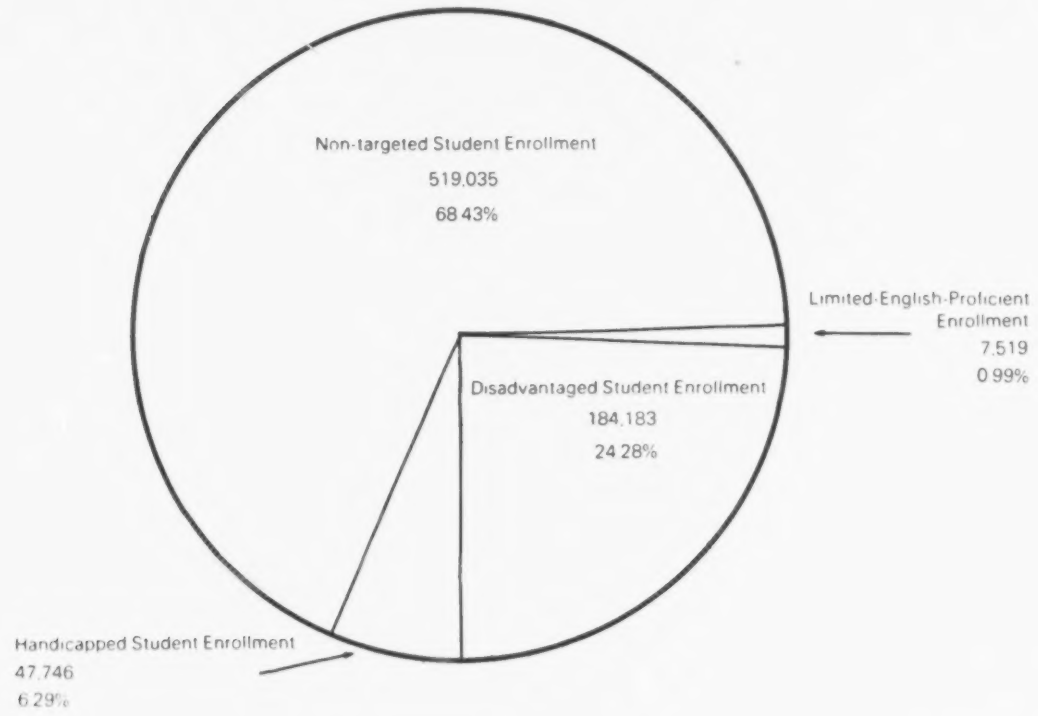
Targeted Student Enrollment by Level

HANDICAPPED STUDENTS
Secondary 33,193
Postsecondary 3,682
Adults 10,871
Total 47,746

DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS
Secondary 127,727
Postsecondary 44,001
Adult 12,455
Total 184,183

LIMITED-ENGLISH PROFICIENCY
Secondary 4,823
Postsecondary 2,096
Adult 600
Total 7,519

Vocational Education Enrollment



Illinois Public School Enrollment

Racial Ethnic Distribution	Enrollment K-12	Percent of Total Enrollment	Percent of Vocational Education Enrollment
White	1,231,326	67.4%	74.42%
Black	406,612	22.3%	18.49%
Hispanic	145,727	8.0%	5.15%
Asian or Pacific Islander	40,535	2.2%	1.64%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2,278	.1%	.24%

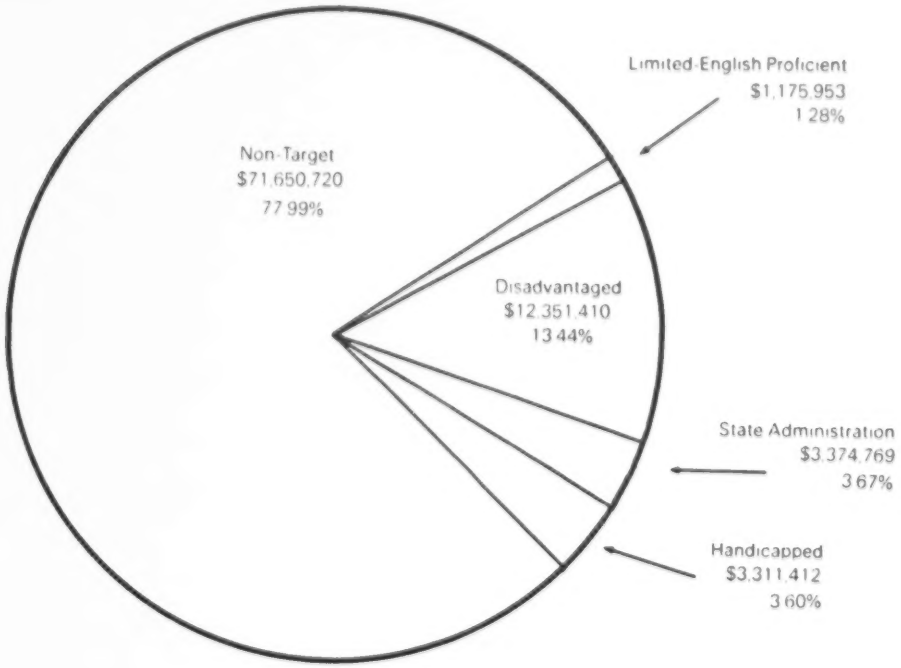
Of the total K-12 enrollment, 32.6 percent represent a minority racial or ethnic group. The vocational education enrollment at grades 9-12, postsecondary, and adult levels combined is comprised of 25.52 percent racial or ethnic minority students. Public school grades K-12 have an enrollment of students with limited English-speaking proficiency of 9 percent.

Funding for Target Population Needs

The Federal vocational education legislation (Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, 1984) emphasizes providing special services for targeted populations to assist these individuals to successfully complete vocational education programs. Emphasis is given by targeting federal funds to provide special services beyond those normally delivered through vocational education. State categorical funds are not provided for serving targeted groups. The following charts depict the emphasis on these at-risk groups through funding.

Distribution of Federal Funds for Vocational Education

Distribution of Combined State and Federal Funds for Vocational Education



Funds represented in the charts include funds used in providing special services to individuals who are in targeted groups, including statewide curriculum development, inservice education, special center operations, VIP, research, and other developmental activities. Targeted population participants are also recipients of services provided by funds shown for "non-target" programs through mainstreaming.

Because the state provides no categorical funds for serving target populations, the relationship of funding distribution changes considerably when State and Federal funds are combined.

Charts do not include local funds or state general revenue funds which may be allocated to vocational education at the local level.

Special Programs

Exemplary programs and services to help at-risk students or targeted populations have been developed throughout Illinois. By assisting students to overcome or accommodate academic, social, emotional, economic, or physical problems or handicapping conditions, special programs have made vocational education more accessible to target populations.

Accessibility is accomplished in most programs by helping students: 1) overcome barriers to success, 2) receive needed support services, or 3) accommodate special needs through innovative methods. The State of Illinois can boast of many successful initiatives serving these target groups to ensure future success.

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education questioned local school personnel involved in providing exemplary programs and services to at-risk students asking why these programs and services were initiated, who suggested them, how students benefited, what made the programs successful and how they are funded. Some of the results follow.

Why were programs initiated?

School personnel nearly always cited more than one reason for initiating special programs and services for specific student groups. Below are reasons given and the percentage of school personnel who indicated each reasons.

- The most frequently cited reason (88.9%) was "we believed we had students who could profit from it." This response indicates that school personnel are assessing student needs and taking steps to accommodate them.
- "To resolve an existing problem" was given by 77.8% of the respondents. (The existing problem was not defined.)
- "Pressure" from parents, students, and the community was cited by 40% of the school personnel.
- One-third (33.3%) indicated the special program was initiated to "meet State and/or federal requirements."
- Having "funds available" contributed to implementing the program in 44.4% of those questioned. Another 22% indicated that the "availability of curriculum" or other instructional materials influenced either the decision to implement a program or to select a particular program.

Who suggested the program?

Clearly, the most influential individual in initiating special programs is the administrator. In 77.8% of the responses, the administrator was cited as having suggested the program. The suggestion was the result of 1) the administrator's own initiative or 2) the concurrence and support of someone else's suggestion.

School personnel indicated that suggestions for special programs are frequently made by more than one person or group. Often when a suggestion is made, various groups are asked to indicate their views. Some schools establish a study committee to determine its feasibility.

Exemplary programs and services for targeted populations reviewed by ICoVE were suggested as follows:

- Advisory councils had suggested the program in 23% of the cases.
- Employers accounted for one-third of the suggestions received.
- Community members and special-interest groups suggested or supported the suggestion for 22.2% of the programs.
- Labor and trade associations initiated or endorsed one-third of the special programs.
- Service delivery areas (SDAs) and private industry councils (PICs) accounted for 11.1% of the suggestions.
- Nonvocational education teachers suggested special

programs more often than did vocational education teachers (32% and 21%, respectively).
- The local board of education or board of control made the fewest suggestions (10%).

How have students benefited?

- Educators and private-sector individuals involved with the exemplary programs for targeted populations agreed that all participating students benefited in two ways: 1) preparation for employment and improvement of their knowledge of available job opportunities.
- The next most beneficial group of outcomes cited by 78% of the educators and private-sector individuals were: 1) made academic subject matter relevant, 2) provided an alternative to traditional education, and 3) helped students get jobs.
- Educators in 65% of the programs believed students who had participated in these special programs had an improved attitude toward school and a better self-concept.
- About 45% of the educators believed the programs had helped to keep the students in school.

Why did students participate?

About two-thirds of the students were in the special programs because they wanted to participate. The remaining one-third were enrolled at the request of the parents or the court system or were assigned by the school.

Nearly 80% of the participants had been identified as students who could benefit from the program and were then encouraged by guidance counselors, teachers, or parents to participate. Out-of-school participants most often received encouragement from social services agencies, employers, or trade unions.

Why was the program successful?

Seventy percent of the individuals involved with exemplary programs for targeted populations indicated the following reasons for the success of the programs. (Listed in rank order)

1. Served students' needs.
2. Teachers' involvement and commitment.
3. Community support and interest.
4. Students liked the program.
5. Administrator's support.
6. Private-sector involvement.
7. Solved problems for the school.
8. Special funding available.

Other reasons identified in comments by several individuals included the involvement of local advisory councils and private industry councils (PICs) and low staff turnover.

How were programs funded?

In ICoVE's review, the average program serving special needs of students used 2.78 different funding sources. In order of the frequency of use by the category of funding, these were:

- Local funds and/or general revenue/credit-hour funds.
- Vocational education funds, including special funds for disadvantaged and handicapped.
- Employer donations.
- Job Training Partnership Act funds.
- Adult basic funds.
- Special education funds.
- Economic development grants.
- Department of Rehabilitation funds.

One school reported it had provided mini-grants from local funds for teachers who wanted to design special programs.

What is the program's future?

Once programs have been developed and implemented to serve the special student needs, ICoVE found that "as long as funds are available," plans are to continue the program. It appears that target populations can, and want to, be served successfully and that vocational educators possesses the ability to do the job. The barrier is availability of funding.

Publicity for attracting students and gaining program support is achieved through a variety of methods. "Students telling students" was cited as the most effective method. Advertisements, program brochures, presentations, reports, and letters were used to reach various audiences. The methods used and the percentages of audiences reached are as follows:

95.8%	Newspaper, radio, television
88.9%	Board of education or board of control administrator meetings
87.1%	Special-interest groups
82.9%	Faculty and departmental meetings
77.8%	Private industry council
56.1%	Professional or trade associations
44.4%	Local advisory councils
	Civic organizations
42.9%	Parents of participants
40.1%	Employees of private businesses
22.2%	Regional planning councils

Facts and Findings:
At-Risk Populations

Attention to problems of dropouts is not unique to Illinois but a national concern as well. Following is information about dropouts, the consequences they suffer, and the impact they have on the state's economy. Students representing the targeted populations are those students who are at-risk of dropping out of school or the work force or have barriers to attaining the education necessary for being employed at their maximum potential.

Characteristics of Dropouts

Studies conducted through the Illinois State Board of Education's Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education have identified the following characteristics which may serve as warning signals that a student is in need of special services.

- Poor attendance records
- Poor grades
- Low math scores
- Low reading scores
- Low self-concept
- Behavior problems
- Lack of identification with other people
- Full-time employment while in school
- Low socioeconomic background
- Feelings of alienation and isolation (feel they don't belcng)

Student Consequences

- Those who drop out tend to have a lifetime of "negative employment experience" such as:
  - Increased unemployment,
  - Decreased earnings,
  - Fewer promotions.
- Dropouts are two times more likely to be unemployed than are their counterparts who complete high school.
- Dropouts represent 80 percent of the prison population.

Economic Consequences

A close relationship exists between dropping out of school and illiteracy in Illinois. Many individuals are affected by both problems and are characterized by tendencies toward high instances of:

- Low income,
- Unemployment,
- Underemployment,
- Public assistance,
- Crime.

The cost of services for these individuals because of their dependence on society is high in Illinois:

$800,000,000	Illinois unemployment benefits
$2,500,000,000	Aid to families with dependent children
$19,500,000	Custodial care in correctional facilities. The costs in terms of destruction are additional.

In urban settings where dropout rates are higher, economic stress on the city is substantial. Chicago's 43% dropout rate is estimated to cost the city $451,000,000 per class year, according to a special study conducted by Hess and Lauber, 1985. This figure represents the combined losses attributed to each dropout at the following rates:

$25,000	Lost tax revenue per dropout during his/her lifetime because of lower earnings,
$3,950	Welfare and income maintenance per dropout,
$5,750	Cost of crime per dropout.

Commendations for Successful Models

Concern for dropout students is not new to vocational education. In the 1969-70 school year, vocational education in Illinois designed a program to serve students who possessed characteristics of potential dropouts and another to serve those students who had already dropped out, but decided to return to school. These two programs have enjoyed a tenure of success, have been recognized nationally, and have been replicated in numerous cities and states throughout the country.

The first program is known as WECEP or the Work Experience Career Exploration Program. WECEP is designed for 14-15-year-olds who have been identified as potential dropouts. The teachers known as "WECEP Coordinators" work with these students in a variety of special ways, including remedial work to raise their achievement in academic subjects. Partnerships developed through the WECEP Coordinators with the private sector afford students hands-on experiences for exploring career opportunities, as well as experiencing the relevance of school in "at-work experiences and observations."

The second program is known as the ESL or Early School Leaver program. It targets those students who dropped out of school, but have decided to return. Because most students who drop out of school did so because of bad or negative experiences, the ESL program operates through the community college system. This avoids any attempt to entice students to return to the high school they left earlier because of negative experiences. Additionally, because many dropouts who decide to re-enter are older than most high school students, social adjustments are made more readily. The age groups served by ESL programs include:

54%	ages 16-19
21%	ages 20-21
25%	ages 22 and above

WECEP serves approximately 1,800 students each year. Historically, WECEP's success has been consistently demonstrated by the following results.

- At school, 70-75% of the students improved their school attendance, their behavior, and their attitude toward both studying and school itself. Teachers report improvement in WECEP students' self-concept and their relationship with others for 75-81% of the participants. Records repeatedly indicated that approximately 65% of the students who participate in WECEP improve their grade point average.
- During the job-related experiences, employers report that 73-85% of the WECEP students show improvement in the following on-the-job experiences: 1) cooperation with coworkers, 2) initiative, 3) following directions, and 4) completing assignments.
- The successes of the approximately 900 students in the ESL program nearly mirror those of the WECEP students. About 2-3% less of the ESL students improve their grade-point average, but on-the-job improvement ratings given by employers go as high as 94%.
- In both the WECEP and ESL programs, males outnumber females by 55% to 44%. The participation in both programs of racial and ethnic minority groups is about 50%. All participants are disadvantaged with slightly less than 10% identified as handicapped or having limited-English speaking ability.
- A 3-year follow-up of WECEP students (now 17-18-year-olds) found that 87% have remained in school and 33% have already received their diploma. Nearly 60% continue to be employed part-time.
- A one-year follow-up of ESL participants shows that 47% have already received their diploma or GED and that 15% are still working on it. Of the ESL participants 67% receive no form of public assistance.

The Illinois State Board of Education is to be commended for the design and implementation of these two programs. The number of student successes resulting from these programs grows each year.

Through a cooperative effort with the Job Training Partnership Act, educational funds available for serving youth are also being used to expand WECEP and ESL offerings into the JTPA community. This coordinated approach to providing at-risk students with special services is illustrative of the Illinois commitment to serving special populations.

Conclusions

ICoVE's review of successful programs designed to serve students with special needs resulted in several conclusions about vocational education's ability and responsibility for serving targeted populations.

- The accessibility of targeted populations to vocational education programs can be enhanced by providing special programs and services to assist at-risk students to overcome barriers to success.
- Special programs for targeted populations have the interest and support of individuals outside the educational community including employers, labor, special-interest groups, parents, civic organizations, and trade associations.
- Lack of access to vocational education programs caused by economic constraints is most prevalent among teen parents, single parents, displaced homemakers, and dislocated workers.
- Academic failure, low grades and poor achievement scores appear to go hand in hand with low self-esteem and negative attitudes characteristic of students identified as potential dropouts. Special programs in which students experience success show a strong tendency to improve these characteristics.
- Vocational education programs are generally accessible to the citizens of Illinois. Pockets of limited access caused by transportation problems in both urban and rural settings and the inability of schools in rural areas to offer a wide array of programs and services are the most difficult barriers to overcome.
- Administrators play a vital role in the initiation and continued success of special programs for special populations.
- The average expenditure of vocational education federal funds for each targeted student participating in a special program is approximately $102 (including individualized services plus statewide research curriculum development, teacher inservice, etc.). When matched (as required by federal law) with state and/or local funds, this "extra effort" totals $204 per student. This cost of prevention is far less than the average costs of unemployment, lost tax revenue, or other social dependence necessitated from failure when prevention fails.
- Students who are at risk will enroll in special programs on their own initiative and/or if encouraged by counselors, parents, or others.
- Development of model programs, services, and activities designed to serve targeted populations is a valuable state initiative that often determines whether or not a special service will be provided at the local level. Model programs are being transported and implemented throughout the state.
- Without federal funds to serve targeted populations, nearly half of the existing programs would not have been implemented.
- Vocational education has the ability to serve at-risk students successfully.
- Services provided to targeted populations in school have been shown to enhance the student's success in school, attitude toward school, ability to get a job, and tendency to remain in school.
- Services provided to targeted populations who are already out of school have been shown to enhance the student's success in returning to school, upgrading job skills, making career and occupational decisions, managing personal lives, and seeking and obtaining employment.
- Illinois has numerous model programs available for replication and use at the local level to serve the needs of targeted populations. These will be particularly valuable to the regional delivery systems as they become fully implemented.
- The private sector is able and willing to be a valuable resource for special programs to serve at-risk populations.
- Successful programs designed to reduce the number of students who drop out of high school are available and have a proven success record for nearly 20 years. A limited number of these programs are operational. Cooperation with other governmental programs has assisted with some efforts for expansion.

Recommendations

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 requires that ICoVE: 1) analyze and report the availability of needed vocational education activities and services and 2) report to the Illinois State Board of Education about equal access to quality vocational education programs for special populations. In addition to these reports, ICoVE makes the following recommendations related to serving targeted populations.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION should:

1. Continue to provide leadership through research and development activities which make services available statewide such as:
   - Development of instructional materials,
   - Model program design,
   - Information useful in serving targeted populations,
   - Inservice education to assist teachers in working with students who have special needs.
2. Expand the availability of services to at-risk students through the regional delivery system.
3. Require operating procedures that will expedite responsibilities for assessing and serving targeted populations through the regional delivery system.

   Assist regional delivery systems to identify and coordinate available resources for serving targeted populations such as:
   - Private sector including management and labor;
   - JTPA programs including SDAs and PICs;
   - Community organizations and special-interest groups;
   - Other public sector programs such as corrections, adult education, rehabilitation services, and employment services.
5. Require regional delivery systems to identify potential dropouts and provide services such as those available through WECEP and encourage the use of the ESL program to serve dropouts who return to school.
6. Request state vocational education funds to make programs such as WECEP and ESL accessible to all students who could benefit from them.
7. Use the regional delivery system to expand special services currently being provided through the "center" concept for meeting needs of targeted populations with services such as:
   - Career and occupational information and counseling,
   - Job-seeking skills,
   - Personal counseling,
   - Language services,
   - Parenting and management skills,
   - Remedial services,
   - Assessment services,
   - Employment services,
   - Referral services.

Success Stories

Basic Nurse Assistant Training Program

Oakton Community College Des Plaines, Illinois

Community College and Private Industry Council work together to place 85 percent of their graduates with a 90 percent plus retention rate.

Since its inception in 1983, the Basic Nurse Assistant Training (BNAT) program at Oakton Community College has provided 136 students with marketable vocational skill training leading to certification as nurse assistants. Graduates are employed in nursing homes, hospitals, rehabilitation centers and private homes; a small number have gone on to programs of study leading to associate of arts or baccalaureate degrees.

This C.N.A. program is very helpful for the families with less income. It gives a chance for young people to get a job and start their own living instead of depending on others.

—A. Chacko, the older sister of a limited-English proficiency student and now a Certified Nurse's Aide working full-time in a nursing home

Special Needs Served

The BNAT program is an exemplary program serving the special needs of many targeted populations, including limited-English proficient, unemployed youth and adults, and academically and financially disadvantaged. Other targeted populations that are served include single parents, teen parents, displaced homemakers, ethnic populations, older workers, high school dropouts, and nontraditional roles.

Support services provided to students include reimbursement for child care and transportation; academic and career counseling; and tuition, books and uniforms provided at no cost. Group and individual counseling is available, and all staff work on enhancing the students' self-esteem. The resources of the college—such as the health service office, the learning laboratory and the library—also are available to students as needed.

They enforce self-confidence and motivation as well as the caring attitudes which make these program graduates successful nurse assistants.

Oakton's Basic Nurse Assistant Program serves the mutual needs of local employers and the disadvantaged adults of our area. It is a results-oriented program.

—Robert E. Laine, Executive Director, Northern Cook County Private Industry Council

Outstanding Features of the BNAT

1. Job Placement. The program includes 18 hours of pre-employment training specifically designed to introduce students to the world of work, prepare them for applying and interviewing for jobs, and provide them with job counseling and employment leads. Once during the final weeks of each program cycle, a "Career Day" is held during which employers with job openings for certified nurse's aides are invited to meet and interview current and former students. Follow-up support services to students for improved job retention are also provided. As a result, the BNAT program has had a placement rate of approximately 85% over the past three years.

2. English as a Second Language Instruction. Each class of 15 to 20 students includes three to six students with limited-English proficiency. An English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor works closely with students from a range of ethnic backgrounds, e.g., Southeast Asian, East Indian, Middle Eastern, Korean and Polish. Some students come into the program with work experience in the health care field in their native countries, but their limited English is a barrier to successful employment. The instructor focuses on job-related English as required by nurse's aides and communication and cultural differences between the U.S. and the students' native countries. Thirty-eight limited-English-speaking students have successfully completed the program and been placed into jobs.

3. Basic Skills Tutoring. Many of the students coming into the BNAT program have limited educational skills and/or are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Students are accepted into the program without high school diplomas or GED certificates. The developmental instructor provides basic skills remediation on both a group or an individual basis, depending upon students' needs. The instructor helps students improve test-taking and study skills and assists in building their job-specific vocabulary. As a result, persons who might otherwise be unable to succeed in a vocational education program such as BNAT are able to graduate and become eligible for jobs.

The program has been validated by both external and student evaluations. Each 10-week BNAT program is approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Community College Board and is funded by the Northern Cook County Private Indu try Council.

When you have completed this program you will feel terrific with no problems finding employment at all. Everyone gets old—everyone needs help and that's where C.N.A. comes in.

—Cindy Horton, recent graduate now employed in a nursing home.

External evaluations of the program show that it is highly regarded by professionals in the field of education and training. Student evaluations, which are completed at the end of each training cycle, show that 93% believe that the program is excellent and feel that it could not be improved.

In sum, the Basic Nurse Assistant Training program is one that serves the underserved populations of Northern Cook County and serves them and the community well. It is an outstanding program.

Nominated by: Mary L. Mittler, Vice President for Educational. Services/Dean, Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Plaines, IL 60016

For additional information, contact: Kathleen Ahern-Gray, Coordinator/Instructor, Oakton Community College, BNAT Program, 7701 N. Lincoln Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077, 312/674-5950

Oakton Food Service Program
Oakton Community College
Des Plaines, Illinois

Developmentally disabled students "bridge the gap" with hands-on work experience to compete in the job market.

The Food Service Training Program at Oakton Community College provides employment and training opportunities for developmentally disabled high school graduates. This program combines on-the-job training in a hospital kitchen with a pre-employment skill group and basic skills classes in reading, writing and mathematics. Through a combination of training and group experience in classroom instruction, the program helps special needs students to acquire the necessary employment skills, good work habits, self-confidence and independence needed for lifelong employment. With the current emphasis on serving special needs youth and adults in the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, this program demonstrates a unique process for serving post high school, handicapped students.

Program Grew Out of Need

The Food Service Training Program grew out of a perceived need by the ASSIST Committee and several Oakton administrators. These individuals realized that a number of recent high school graduates and adults in the community were developmentally disabled and had particular difficulty in obtaining employment. Due to the availability of jobs in the area and the skill level required, the Food Service program was developed in March 1983. Funds were obtained from the Northern Illinois Private Industry Council with supplementary funds from the Illinois Community College Board.

In just the few short months of the program I have watched Lynn turn into a mature, self-confident young woman who is now ready to take her place in the world as a self-supporting individual. Besides learning a skill with which to obtain and hold a respectable job, she has learned social maturity and a pleased-with-herself attitude that is unbelievable.

Tomorrow morning she starts the job you found for her at the nursing home and is looking forward to it eagerly, a little scared, naturally, but with the knowledge that she is trained for it and capable of performing well.

—Mrs. Carole Tucker, Parent

A maximum of 12 students are enrolled per 23-week session. Eligible students must have finished high school and be certified as either educably mentally handicapped or learning disabled. Students are often referred to the program from community-based agencies, high school and college guidance counselors, and parents.

Students Get Jobs!

Since 1983, 59 students have graduated from the Food Service Training Program. Of these students 51 were successfully placed into entry-level employment and thirty-day follow-ups indicate a continued employment rate of 75 percent. Students are currently employed in fast food and family restaurants, hospital and nursing home kitchens, and employee cafeterias.

Because the students have spent their training time in an actual work situation (the kitchen of Holy Family Hospital), they have had time and experience to internalize behavior and attitudes necessary for success in unsubsidized employment. Students not only become employable as a result of the program, but we help each student maximize his/her ability towards self-sufficiency and independence.

Acquire Independent Living Skills

Students who have completed the program can use public transportation to reach their place of employment, have begun to master skills needed for independent living such as money management and personal shopping, can participate in social activities with their peers, and display appropriate social behavior. This is quite an accomplishment for students who, when they came into the program, had never used public transportation independently or held a job.

The Program's Outstanding Achievements

1. The program is one of the few in the Chicago area to provide transitional training for developmentally disabled students who have completed high school and are inappropriate candidates for sheltered workshops, but who have no employment skills.
2. The program is provided to the students at a very nominal cost, thus no students are excluded due to lack of financial resources.
3. The program provides each student with one or more marketable job skills at the program's completion.
4. The program develops each student's proficiency in the basic skill areas of reading, writing, and mathematics leading to independent living.
5. The program helps each student secure employment in a paid position commensurate with his/her skills.
6. In 1985, the program won the Secretary of Education Award for the State of Illinois. It was voted the Outstanding Educational Program in the Adult Division by the Illinois Vocational Educational Association. There were twenty-two contenders for the award.

Mike Daley and Laurel Eness are lucky. If they had been born a few years earlier, they might have run into the same dead end some students with learning disabilities have faced after completing high school. But thanks to Oakton Community College's Food Service Training Program, which is operated in cooperation with Holy Family Hospital, Daley, 19, Eness, 18, and 10 other students were able to continue school and learn job skills in the Hospital's Food Service area to prepare them for employment.

—The Association of Community College Trustees in its *Advisor*

Mike Daley works with Julie Fraizer of Holy Family Hospital.

Photo on previous page: Joan Heidikamp works in Holy Family Hospital cafeteria.

Nominated by: Phyllis Deutsch, Acting Director, Instructional Support Services, Oakton Community College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016

For additional information, contact: Judy Pisetzner, Food Service Training, Vocational Counselor/Job Developer or Pat Hecker, Program Coordinator, Oakton Community College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016, 312/635-1663

The Early School Leaver (ESL) Program for High School Dropouts

The DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority (DAVEA) Center

Early School Leaver Program—EDUCATION+INDUSTRY—joining together to give students a second chance.

The primary focus of the Early School Leaver Program at the DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority (DAVEA) Center in Addison, Illinois, is preparation and placement of students in entry-level employment and improvement in their general education proficiency.

The program includes five approaches: long-term project; combination of training and academic assistance; training in basic academic skills; an individualized approach; and a program based on collaborative effort of business, education and government. All of these approaches are currently utilized.

The Early School Leaver Program is based upon the premise that with appropriate training, academic remediation and reinforcement, high school dropouts, the population this program serves, can become job-ready.

To assist high school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 21 in obtaining the necessary employability skills, the program incorporates four basic components: GED preparation, career planning/job readiness/job search skills, DAVEA vocational training, and cooperative work training.

GED Preparation

Applicants being considered for the program are given a reading test to insure that they have the necessary proficiency level to succeed in their chosen vocational field. The test is also used as an indication of the amount of remediation necessary to successfully pass the GED exam. The students' preparation in basic skills areas is emphasized and the instructional focus is reading, writing skills and math.

. . . the program has grown in size . . . students who entered the program lacking employability traits and employable skills . . . have improved . . . and are doing very well on the job . . .

—Bruce E. Anderson, Director, DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority

Career Planning/Job Readiness/Job Search Skills

Upon admittance to the program, the coordinator and the student prepare an individualized career plan. This is an agreement between the coordinator and the student as to outcome objectives. Some of the anticipated behavioral/education outcomes include the acquiring of entry-level training in a vocational program; the development of employability traits; the development of job search skills; and the development of basic educational skills in preparation for the GED exam.

Job Readiness/Job Search Skills

Students are encouraged through the class to explore career areas. Everyone is required to complete a resume which may be updated as skills are increased. Other job search skills stressed include telephone techniques, interviewing and job search strategies.

Like so many kids who don't fit the mold designed for traditional programs, Julie was lost—and her self-esteem and energies were fading fast because there seemed no viable alternative.

In short, I'm writing to thank you for returning the interest, enthusiasm, and more importantly—the hope to a youngster.

—A Parent

Vocational Training

Students may be placed in DAVEA vocational training that will offer them the opportunity to develop entry-level skills for employment. A student's vocational placement is determined through the student's preference and the coordinator's recommendation. The decision is also based upon academic skills necessary for success, DAVEA prerequisites, the student's work history and letters of recommendation from employers and/or educators.

Cooperative Work Training

Once the initial adjustment to the program is complete, students are encouraged to obtain part-time employment that correlates with their training. They are encouraged to use job search skills. The coordinator also works as a job developer contacting employers and assisting the students in finding jobs. A training agreement is prepared and signed by the coordinator, supervisor, student and DAVEA student services manager. The agreement illustrates the commitment private industry is making to help youth develop employability skills as outlined in the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the funding source for this program.

Counseling/Supportive Services

Students who may possess educational deficiencies or emotional problems often need counseling to understand and clarify their feelings and to facilitate problem solving. While the coordinator counsels students during training, community referrals may be made for additional, ongoing counseling.

The Early School Leaver Program constantly changes to better accommodate the needs of its participants. In an effort to build on current successes, the coordinator considers recommendations from students, faculty, employers, the DuPage PIC/Job Training Office, and the Illinois State Board of Education.

As a Youth Services Probation Officer, I deal on a daily basis with youth who have dropped out of the traditional school system and are generally turned off to school.

Two of my probationers have successfully completed your program. Both were young, single mothers who began your program during their pregnancy, had their children and then returned to finish the program. Both received their GED and received a certificate in Accounting.

Each of these young woman became involved with your program and mine at a pivotal point in her life. One had lost both parents, and the other had parents in the midst of a divorce and remarriage. Attending your program appeared to give them structive focus and a clearly definable, attainable goal at a time when the rest of their life was in disorder.

Both of these young women went on to jobs after completing your program successfully and are functioning well at my last contact with them.

—Margaret McKenzie, Probation Officer, Department of Probation & Court Services

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Julie Haze with employer, Jack Salzman

Photo on previous page: Chuck Elkins, student in machine tool class at DAVEA.

Nominated by: Susan Pastor, Inter-Agency Coordinator, DuPage PIC/Job Training Office, 1200 Roosevelt Road, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, 312/620-5604

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Back on Step
Youth Alternative Education and Training Program
Lawrence Adult Center
Springfield Public School District #186
Springfield, Illinois

Adult Center helps young adults who have dropped out of school get "Back on Step."

The Lawrence Adult Center has two primary interests. One is education for employment and the second is the completion of secondary-level education. This year, the Lawrence Adult Center implemented a new program, the B.O.S. (Back on Step) program, an alternative late afternoon education and training opportunity, for youth ages 16—21 who have dropped out of school for one semester or those with special permission and a Permit to Enter from their home high school. As the students perform, the program provides youth an opportunity to establish a credibility of intent and purpose.

many have not been able to adjust to peer pressure or been able to fit into a group. In the Back on Step Program, all of the students have had similar backgrounds, problems, and situations. They are taught the value of their education and training by being made employable in a relatively short period of time.

—Sam Boutchee, Retention Specialist, Lawrence Adult Center

Access Featured

An individual educational and vocational training plan is developed for each student. The most important parts of the program include access to these opportunities: (1) Late Afternoon (3:30—6:30 p.m.) Pre-GED Classes—Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies Skill Development; (2) High School Credit Classes—Students earn a high school diploma; (3) Vocational Training Opportunities—Students gain skills for entry-level employment; (4) Pre-Employment Classes—Emphasis is on job-seeking skills/labor market orientation; (5) Job Search Assistance—Lawrence Adult Center instructor for the Back on Step Program assists students in identifying and locating job opportunities; (6) On The Job Training—Financial assistance is provided for qualified students.

Individualized Services

All B.O.S. students are tested for reading and math levels and enrolled in the completer-based "GED 100" program. Step by step, students receive guidance and supervision from the work experience coordinator at the Lawrence Adult Center. The Work Experience Coordinator serves as a counselor, job placement developer, and teacher of pre-employment skills classes. He has developed a program, approved by the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act), that provides these youth with job-finding and job-keeping skills and then assists them in finding suitable unsubsidized employment. The pre-employment classes are designed to prepare them for employment. Areas of study include: preparing the job application form, understanding the various deduction forms, how to look for a job, how to interview, how to maintain employment, and how to leave the job gracefully. Use is made of printed handouts, classroom lectures, videos, cassettes, and role-playing interviews.

Most of these students have left their home high school with little thought about their future. The Back on Step Program offers these students guidance and an alternative to the conventional high school education.

In this program, there are fewer pressures and they receive one-on-one attention. They get the opportunity to learn that their problems are not insurmountable. This program puts the students back into school and a training program at the time they need to be there—while they are still young.

—Mike Kirchner, Work Experience Coordinator, Lawrence Adult Center

Classroom scene "Back on Step" at Lawrence Adult Center.

Trauma Minimized

Enrolled in the late afternoon (3:30—6:30 p.m.), students are given the opportunity to adjust to the return to school with the least amount of trauma. At this particular time of the day, they are the only students in the building; therefore, they receive the special attention and instruction they need.

Since September, 26 of the students enrolled in the B.O.S. program have accepted employment.

I told my friend about this program and got her to come to the Center and enroll. I also told her about the day care service available.

The program has helped me get a job . . . The school has gotten me reinterested in my education and given me hope and determination . . . I am proud of my job and I'm grateful for all that the school and Mike Kirchner [Work Experience Coordinator] has done for me.

—Annie Higgins, Student in the B.O.S. Program

Photo on previous page: Mike Kuckuer leads classroom activities in "B.O.S." program.

This success story is being submitted for national recognition.

Nominated by: Dr. Jack Pfeiffer, Principal, Lawrence Adult Center, 101 East Laurel Street, Springfield, Illinois 62704

For additional information, contact: Dr. Jack Pfeiffer, Principal or David Meinders, Program Manager, Lawrence Adult Center, 101 East Laurel Street, Springfield, IL 62704, 217/525-3144

Welding Technology Program
Belleville Area College
Belleville, Illinois

Nationally recognized Belleville welding program capable of tailoring program to meet specific needs of employers, unions, and students—employers seek graduates.

Belleville Area College's Welding Technology program was initiated in 1975 by Garner Kimbrell at the Menard Correctional Center in Chester, Illinois. In 1976, the program was introduced in Belleville at the Belleville East High School Extension Center. In 1980, when present facilities were built, the program moved to the main campus of Belleville Area College.

Instructor Cited as Catalyst

Mr. Kimbrell, Welding Technology Coordinator, is the catalyst behind the program. Kimbrell had 20 years experience in the welding industry prior to his involvement with B.A.C. He is a member of the National American Welding Society's General Education Committee and has spearheaded development of national accreditation standards for college welding curricula. Kimbrell also serves as the Chairman of Student Affairs Programming for the American Welding Society's local chapter.

The Welding Technology program at Belleville Area College provides instruction in all types of welding. It involves extensive hands-on experience, as well as coursework in employer-employee relationships to prepare students for today's job market. The program stresses hands-on experience; students spend 630 hours in the laboratory and 202 hours in lectures.

During the year 1984 the W G Krummrich Plant signed a new labor agreement. The primary changes in this new contract was the consolidation of several crafts. As part of this effort it became necessary to train a number of individuals to become proficient in the skill of maintenance welding.

Mr. Kimbrell, a former craftsman himself, was able to understand the needs of the plant maintenance welder and tailor a course that accomplished our objectives.

—Jerry Cameron, Maintenance Training Specialist, Monsanto Co.

Employers Pleased

The program's success rate is unparalleled. Students are finding success in the local job market, as well as in the national job market. Employers are impressed with the graduates' skills and abilities as craftsmen.

Over the past two years, Central Mine Inc. of St. Louis, Missouri, has employed 26 former students of the program. Central Mine's policy is to hire only B.A.C. trained welders. A.O. Smith of Granite City, Illinois, employs 10 welders who were trained at B.A.C. The list continues with Engineered Air Systems and J.S. Alberici, both of St. Louis. In all, over 100 former students of the B.A.C. Welding Technology program have attained employment over the past two years.

Presently, the program has over 130 students. Some students travel daily from Springfield, Illinois. Others travel from Chicago (300 miles) to receive the training that the B.A.C. Welding Technology program offers.

The competitive edge students receive from a modern facility and expert instruction serves well the use of local talent in generating economic development through quality construction.

Workers Upgraded

The involvement with local companies and unions is also a success. The program both trains and upgrades the skills of company employees and union members. Sixty percent of the present enrollment are employees and union members upgrading their skills. Monsanto has 10 employees training 40 hours a week at B.A.C. Pipefitters Local 439 has 22 journeymen upgrading their skills, and Pipefitters Local 101 has journeymen upgrading skills at B.A.C. Belleville Area College also assists local employers in the certification of their welders.

The current welding course at B.A.C. was tailored to meet Monsanto Co. needs and is doing just that.

—Jerry Cameron, Monsanto W.G.K. Plant Training Dept., Sauget, IL

National Recognition

The Welding Technology program, a member of the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA), consistently has winners in state contests and top five finishers in the national contests. The program also works in conjunction with A. O. Smith of Granite City in training personnel through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

The program began with a targeted population, specifically the Menard Correctional Center, and has continued this program with good success. An incarcerated student can earn an Associate Degree in Welding Technology from B.A.C. This program provides the incarcerated access to a skill that may assist them in their re-entry to society. Former students of this program are now employed in the welding industry.

Mr. Kimbrell's involvement with the AWS has brought considerable attention to Belleville Area College and the Welding Technology program. The National American Welding Society refers many inquiries concerning educational welding programs to Mr. Kimbrell. The program often serves as a model for other schools that are setting up similar programs. In 1984, along with the AWS, B.A.C. presented the first-ever Midwest Clinic, geared for instructors of the welding profession.

Steamfitters Local 439 East St. Louis, Illinois, in conjunction with the mechanical piping contractors has established a Journeymen Advancement Training Program for the sole purpose of upgrading the skills required of journeyman pipefitters and apprentices, especially to the pipe welding and fabrication field.

We feel that the Belleville Area College training center is a valuable and important necessity for the continuing development of our employees and members.

—Donald J. Bailey, Business Mgr., Steamfitters Local 439, E. St. Louis, IL

Credits in Higher Education

When, in a recent letter-to-the-editor of a local newspaper, B.A.C. came under attack for offering welding courses as part of the curricula of higher education, many letters came in from all over the country commending B.A.C. for offering courses that directly relate to the world of work. Harold E. Lewis, CAE, USA Official Representative, International Organization for the Promotion of Vocational Training, writes "My hat is off to the Belleville Area College for offering some course work that applies to the real world of work outside the snobbery of the academic community." Eugene G. Hornberger, Chairman of the General Education Committee of the American Welding Society, writes "I am personally familiar with the facilities and program at B.A.C. Both are first-class. The quality of the program is well known among those in the welding industry. B.A.C. is, and rightly should be, proud of its occupational programs."

Welding is a skill and trade that will be in demand for many years beyond the year 2000. The Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts a 25.9% increase in the number of welders and flame cutters from 1980-90.

Welders will not disappear with robotics. There will always be operators, programmers and inspectors behind those robots.

—Dr. Nelson C. Wall, American Welding Society, Miami, FL

To summarize the contributions and achievements of the B.A.C. Welding Technology Program, B.A.C. has:

1. Established a program that enhances student opportunities.
2. Established an exemplary program.
3. Worked successfully with local companies and labor unions in the training of their employees and members.
4. Provided well-trained welders to local and national companies.
5. Established a successful program for a targeted population.
6. Worked in conjunction with local companies and the JTPA.
7. Supported Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA).
8. Supported and promoted vocational education as having an important place in higher education.

Photo on previous page: Welding Laboratory at Belleville Area College.

This success story is being submitted for national recognition.

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The Special Services Center
Belleville Area College
Belleville, Illinois

Special Services: Every Woman's Center, Vocational Student Assistance, and Services for the Disabled.

Seminars & Workshops: Positive Self-Development, Career/Life Planning, Job-Seeking Skills, Returning Adult Orientation, Woman's Support and Male Discussion.

An identified special needs student is one who may require and receive special assistance and related services. He or she may not be able to succeed in the regular vocational education program without special assistance or modifications.

Our goal at Belleville Area College's Special Services Center is to try to insure that all qualified people will have access to quality training that is realistic for gainful employment and suited to their needs, interests and abilities.

Assessment of Need

To achieve this goal, the B.A.C. Special Services Center has set up a support program geared to address specifically or with referrals absolutely any special need this target group may have. We begin by using various assessment tools including personal interviews, interest and aptitude testing, math and English placement testing, Career Planning Program testing, vocational interest surveys, self-directed career searches, and questionnaires and by coordinating referral testing such as with the Department of Rehabilitative Services.

Using as much concrete information as possible, the staff offers information and referrals, poses possible alternatives and helps guide the student as he or she begins to make educational, career or life choices using good decision-making skills. Different strategies are used in presenting awareness information. Written materials are available to our students. Films and special programs of interest are presented. Workshops and seminar curricula are developed and facilitated for time management, communication skills, study skills, career life planning, job-seeking skills, positive self-development and stress management. Community consultants are called in to assist in areas demanding specific expertise such as legal awareness, money management, substance abuse, domestic violence and abuse, single parenting, and wellness. Support and discussion groups are developed, as needed, to deal with problems such as divorce, mid-life crisis, and unemployment.

I am blind and have overcome many obstacles to get where I am today. I would like to share my story with you.

I began taking courses at Belleville Area College fall semester 1982. I was afraid to go to school because I didn't know if the college could meet my needs. How would I take tests or find my classes? Before registering, I was referred to the Handicapped Special Needs Service Center. After exploring program options, I decided to major in Secretarial Science. After becoming aware of the help available through the Center, it was much easier to make my final decision to start school. The special needs counselor for handicapped students reads tests to me and arranges for textbooks provided on tape and school materials in large print.

I am now working part-time as a Medical Transcriptionist at the Home Nursing Service in Belleville. I am also a Low Vision Support Group member at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows as well as a volunteer broadcaster for Radio Information Service for the Blind and Handicapped at the Shrine.

—Kim Vogel, From *Special Services Center Newsletter*, Belleville Area College "Success Story"

"Help" Provides Resources

A "Help" directory of Metro-East agencies, programs and services is available for anyone to use. B.A.C. and the Special Services Center disseminate copies to students and other members of the community upon request. An index is provided for a quick identification of which agencies deal with each specific problem. Very specific and appropriate referrals are made as each student's needs are identified.

Career Planning

In addition to these survival-type referrals, the Special Services Center also coordinates referrals within the college to help each student have a successful educational experience. Referrals are made in areas of financial aid,

tutoring, and academic advisement. The Special Services Center provides information to students about employment opportunities available at the college and in the community. Advice is given to students as to both part-time and full-time employment opportunities in order to fill the needs created by family and other scheduling demands.

The most recent service developed to assist students in career decisions is B.A.C.'s Career Center. The Center provides one-on-one counseling, help with resumes and interest and aptitude testing, and other library resources. The Career Center is conveniently located in the B.A.C. library.

Services For Handicapped

The Special Services Center serves handicapped special needs students additionally by providing them with necessary and appropriate equipment and accommodations. Some of their services include talking books, large print materials, individualized testing, special loan equipment, readers, notetakers, and early registration.

The Special Services Center staff has been carefully selected from people who are involved and dedicated to meeting the needs of others. It is through the commitment and caring of the Special Services staff that we find the key to making the program a success.

Instructor Assistance

Brochures have been specially designed by the Special Services Center to assist instructors who have students who are blind or partially sighted, learning disabled, deaf or hearing impaired, orthopedically impaired or in wheelchairs.

Pat Brian meets with a Special Services Center client.

"Free Helping Hands"

"Please help me, I need to talk to someone I don't know what to do or where to go. I'm so afraid."

Phone calls such as this are not new to the people in Every Woman's Center (EWC). Director Pat Brian and her assistant Claricy Agne are experienced in assisting men and women who want and need some support or guidance to face a problem. Located in the Counseling Center, their offices are open to anyone with a problem, ranging from changing of careers to coping with the loss of a loved one.

The EWC schedules workshops and seminars for adults who are returning to school, for individuals who are starting out on the job market, and for displaced homemakers, women who are returning to the work force after staying at home for many years. There are support groups for people who are divorced or those contemplating divorce. The Center offers one-on-one counseling sessions for anyone who needs help.

"We receive referrals of battered women from hospitals and from . . . the Women's Crisis Shelter in Belleville," Ms. Brian said. "There is a close follow-up with all our clients. We offer information and referrals so they can help themselves. We never turn anyone away without trying to help them."

Men have begun to react to the many types of help the women are receiving. They now realize that the EWC is not only for women. Audiences have been made up of 50 percent men at programming geared toward legal awareness and money management. Men are now looking into starting some discussion groups. Areas of interest mentioned have included single parenting, divorce, support, stress management, career change, and job-seeking skills. If enough men show interest and sign up, the programs will develop.

The Stress Management workshop offered in conjunction with the Counseling Center, helps participants develop skills to cope with stress in their personal and professional lives. They learn to become more assertive and self-confident.

"We like to teach self-development . . . to get these individuals to a point where they are able to cope and deal with personal problems that are blocking their abilities," commented Ms. Brian.

—From *BAC Talk*, Belleville Area College Newspaper

Photo on previous page: Pat Brian, Director of Special Services Center works with seminar participants.

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"On the Road Again" and gainfully employed—women and men, chronically unemployed, those needing new skills, first-time employed, 21-54 years of age—after completing the Tractor-Training Program.

Parkland College recently instituted a new tractor-trailer training program. Currently, it is the only state-supported school in Illinois offering a program which follows basic guidelines as established by the U. S. Department of Transportation and which has been approved by the Illinois Community College Board as a ten-semester-hour certificate program.

New Occupation for 59 Grads

Last year during our pilot offerings we trained 59 drivers for a new occupation. Most of the graduates were successfully placed resulting in gainful employment for the trainees.

Industry has readily accepted our students because of the quality training they receive including eight weeks of intensive training to include 320 hours of instruction, 1,000 miles behind the wheel, approximately 80 hours of class work, and three weeks of lot work. Lot work consists of backing up exercises, docking, and shifting patterns.

Harlene Helton may not be the only female truck driver around, but she's got to rank right up there among the most enthusiastic.

"It's just something I've wanted to do for years," the Mahomet woman said. She drove a pickup truck for her father as a youngster and has been thrilled with the idea of truck driving since then.

With her two daughters grown and on their own, Helton, who has worked at a variety of occupations, decided it was now or never. She enrolled in Parkland College's truck driving course earlier this year and graduated along with two other women and eight men about a month ago.

The 47-year-old woman has made applications and had interviews with several transport companies and has no doubt she'll find a position soon.

—Sherri Sindelar, Staff Writer, *News Gazette*

Driver Alertness

The instructors are dedicated to the students' program and continually stress safety and economy. The safety aspect guarantees protection for both future employers' equipment and the students' own personal well-being. The economic aspect protects the student's reputation as a cost-effective driver and guarantees job security. The growing concern within the trucking industry is fuel economy. We teach driving techniques which result in optimum equipment performance.

. . . Teamsters Local 26 wholeheartedly supports the Parkland Tractor Training Program. I can certainly see the need for such programs for our young people . . .

—Bill Bounds, President, Local #26, Chauffeurs Teamsters & Helpers Union

Serves Many Needs

Our students are comprised of a mixed and diverse group. Students have ranged in age from 21 to 54 years and have included women as well as men. Some have been chronically unemployed, some have entered the job market for the first time, and still others have been retrained specifically for this industry. For whatever reason students enter the program, they gain skill and find employment.

The Tractor-Trailer Training Program has improved the working and living standards for many adults in the Parkland community. Students come to this program in the hope of improving themselves and their standard of living. Additionally, this program offers students a chance for a new career.

The class was well worth what I paid for it. I learned a great deal, and the 1,000 miles behind the wheel was the best part. Placement assistance is a nice feature, but I really didn't need it because I got hired right away.

—Jeff Smith, Former Student, Urbana, IL

Serves the Industry

The Tractor-Trailer Training Program has opened a new avenue for the trucking industry to seek qualified employees. With rising insurance costs, the trucking industry is demanding safe, qualified drivers. Parkland serves this demand by meeting and surpassing the Department of Transportation's standards. The industry knows that the future lies with safe and fuel-conscious drivers. Our program emphasizes the importance of safety and driving techniques which help achieve maximum fuel economy. Providing the trucking industry with someone to turn to for help is an ongoing goal of our program.

The Tractor-Trailer Training Program is used equally by the trucking industry and the general public. The growth of, and the demand for, this program is endless. The future rests with the need to continually improve safety and cost-effective transportation in the trucking industry.

This nontraditional eight-week training program is appealing to those who want to gain an entry-level skill in an area where attractive nationwide employment opportunities exist.

—Gayle W. Wright, Division Chair, Parkland Community College

Nominated by: Dave Wilkinson, Program Coordinator, Parkland College, 2400 W. Bradley, Champaign, IL 61821

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Specialized Vocational Training Program
Triton College
River Grove, Illinois

Triton and JTPA provide help beyond high school for special education students—and they get jobs!

The Specialized Vocational Training Program has been serving the special needs population in Suburban Cook County since its inception in 1975 under CETA. At that time, educators at Triton College recognized a need in the community for job assistance for students who had been participants in Special Education Programs at district high schools. Typically, these students had little or no work experience, undeveloped job skills and job-seeking skills, and little idea of what job potentialities they might possess.

Barb and Jesse live with their families in a disadvantaged neighborhood near Chicago. They attended special education classes and received diplomas from their local high school, but after graduation neither could find a job. Both Barb and Jesse are educable mentally retarded—they can't read past the second or third grade level. Jesse is blind in one eye.

Administrators of Triton College in River Grove, IL, aware that there were no programs in Illinois public community colleges for people like Barb and Jesse, decided to do something about it . . . they set up a program to train 30 educable mentally handicapped persons from suburban Cook County. The ever-increasing need for reliable foodservice industry employees prompted the college to concentrate its program on training for janitorial and food service industry jobs. The only eligibility requirement is the student's previous participation in special education classes.

Triton administrators arranged to train the new students using the college's large industrial kitchen, the student snack bar and a formal dining room with its small kitchen.

Barb and Jesse are now full-time regular employees of a local hospital. They have proven to their employers and to themselves that they can be productive and reliable.

—NRA News, National Restaurant Association

A Labor Market Need

The food service industry was in need of trained personnel in entry-level positions. The Specialized Program addressed those needs, and from that time to the present, has consistently placed from eighty to ninety percent of its participants on jobs in the community, with seventy percent retaining their jobs for six months or more.

We were concerned that no opportunities existed for special education students beyond the high school program. Most were faced with two choices: stay at home; participate in a sheltered workshop.

—Vernon A. Magnesen, Associate Vice President, Triton College

Coordination of Resources

Applicants to the program are referred primarily by DORS personnel and high school counselors. After a screening involving a job sample and interview, participants are selected. Using the cafeteria facilities at the college, training is provided for various jobs in the food service industry.

It is a win-win situation for the student, Saga Corporation and our client as well.

—Mindy Hale, Food Service Director, Saga Corporation

David is one of our best workers. He is conscientious and dependable.

—Food Service Director, LaGrange Colonial Manor

Our managers and supervisors consider your candidates as outstanding employees who value their jobs and bring enthusiasm and desire along with their ability to work.

—Robert E. Arp, President, Grover's Oyster Bar

The program ideally realizes the goals for which JTPA funding is intended. Many of the participants in the program would have difficulty obtaining marketable job skills or securing employment . . .

—David K. Kozlowski, Member, Private Industry Council

Individual Needs Met

Participants move through the various training areas at their own rate. In addition to this hands-on training, job-seeking and interview skills are practiced as the participant nears readiness for actual job placement. When a job placement is secured, program personnel provide support and follow-up services as determined by individual needs. A close linkage with the private sector is maintained throughout the program.

The success of this vocational program has been remarkable in terms of placement levels, finding suitable jobs for most participants and providing them with a start in the world of work. For many of these post-secondary young adults, personal development and growth is an outstanding feature of their participation. Learning specific job skills generally raises their confidence and self-esteem and enables them to make the transition to a productive position in the community.

My husband and I appreciate your interest in our daughter Julia. You are involved in a very important program . . . For many it is a key to a responsible future. We feel that it would be very beneficial for Julia. It would give her a tool to help her support herself.

—Joan Schorsch, Parent

Marion Mandala sets up a salad bar.

Photo on previous page: John Reeves prepares food for salad bar.

Nominated by: Vernon A. Magnesen, Associate Vice President, Triton College, 2000 Fifth Avenue, River Grove, IL 60171

For additional information, contact: Rebecca Meggert, Project Director, Triton College, 2000 Fifth Avenue, River Grove, IL 60171, 312/456-0300 Ext. 625

The Engineering Experience
Joliet Township High School
Joliet, Illinois

Minorities and females look to nontraditonal careers through The Engineering Experience.

This four-week summer school course exploring engineering is a creative expansion of the traditional vocational education curriculum. It takes a proactive stance on reshaping the content and image of present day vocational education to one which provides curriculum choices for every student. This experiential class is designed for the academically above-average student. In student selection, preferential treatment was given to females and minorities since they are not well represented in engineering careers. The Engineering Experience was pilot-tested during the summer of 1985 at Joliet Township High Schools and resulted from a partnership between Joliet Township High School District 204 and Education for Technology Employment Project of Will and Grundy Counties and Illinois Bell.

I have been teaching for 35 years and certainly The Engineering Experience was the high point of my professional career.

—Don Hopkins, Physics-Chemistry Teacher, Joliet Township High Schools

Project Rationale

Many students have little opportunity to enroll in vocational and/or career education courses. They are academically trapped into courses to meet college entry requirements. Consequently, they are not able to test their abilities, interests and knowledge against the realities of the career world, nor do they have opportunities to apply classroom learned knowledge to real work situations.

Young people, even though very bright, need to be educationally motivated. The Engineering Experience format provides enriching, stimulating classroom experiences to validate the educational worth of high school courses. Lectures and demonstrations presented by professional engineering role models provide students with firsthand information about the realities of an engineer's work.

Students need to establish, reaffirm, and redirect the course of their purported class selection and educational plans. They need guidance in determining if they want an engineering degree, and if so, what type of degree and what type of education/training will meet the needs of a specific type of engineering career.

Student Comments:

—I think the program is great! It really set me in the right direction because I wasn't positive on what type of engineering I wanted to get into, let alone how many types of engineering there were to choose from.

—This program will be beneficial to anyone slightly interested in engineering. The GPA is fair and the course will look good on the transcripts. This program is a good way of informing students about engineering, which they otherwise would not have a chance to learn about, unless they investigated on their own.

—The course was enlightening to the choices I have in engineering. . . . It was a fun course and I hope it is successful next year.

—I thought it was a very real class and if there was a continuation to this class I would sign up for that also.

—It was a fun class. I was only bored once or twice. It was an excellent idea to have those trips because one can see what atmosphere an engineer works in. But I think it was not as in-depth as I wanted it to be.

—I think this program should be made more aware to people because I'm sure they would be interested in it. I think the program should be longer so that the class can get more in-depth about every type of engineering. (Five types were covered.)

—This program was very helpful in explaining engineering to me. For first timers, it was pretty good, but still needs some improvements. Possibly a little more hands-on learning.

—The class was everything I expected and more. I felt like I got a better understanding of what an engineer does.

Engineers Help Structure Content

Twelve engineers representing the following areas of engineering were chosen for the sixteen person task force: biomedical, electrical, mechanical, chemical, process, industrial, broadcasting, architectural, structural, material and metals, nuclear, and environmental. This task force structured the course to emphasize the five major engineering categories which include hundreds of specific types of engineering careers. Academic skills generic to those five categories were identified. The course provides an overview of each engineering area, theoretical (academic subject) knowledge necessary for that field, a project to apply that knowledge, and a business site visit or classroom lecture by an engineer. Information on engineering as a college major, financial assistance, and college selection is also presented.

. . . goes far in introducing prospective engineering students to the various engineering disciplines and exposing them to applications of basic science and mathematics concepts.

—Barbara J. Schlenger, Engineering Division, Argonne National Laboratory

Impressive Results

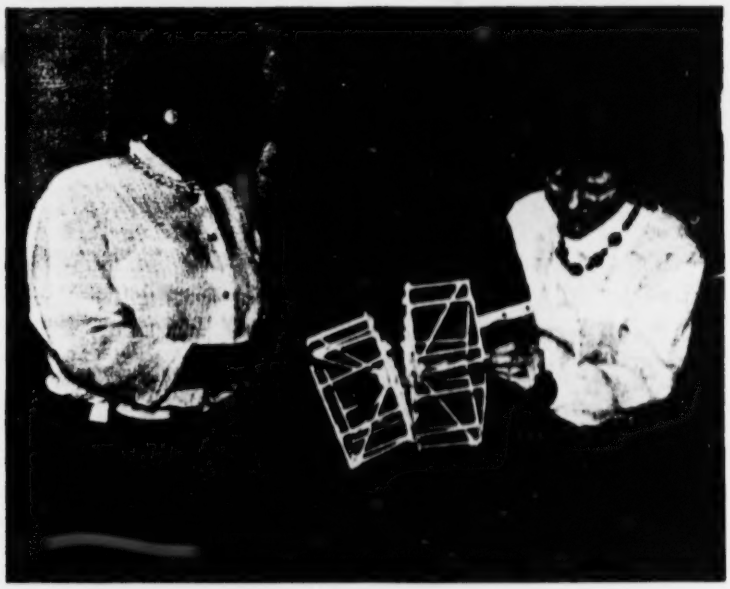
The sixteen-member task force and the educators indicated they are excited about the program concept and believe that it fills a void in our educational system. Various business groups including three Chambers of Commerce and business advisory councils are impressed with the format and the ability of school districts to provide new curricula for our youngsters to meet an academic deficit.

The student evaluations further affirm the program's value. Ninety-one percent of the students rated the workshop as "excellent" or "very good." It is noteworthy that 31% of the students shifted their views from not considering engineering as a career or only as a possibility, to being very certain that they wanted an engineering future.

Due to the interest in this project, plans are being made to continue offering the course at Joliet Township High Schools and to disseminate the information statewide.

As a parent with a child in the high school system, I would like to express my gratitude . . . for piloting such an outstanding program . . .

—Sam Rasheed, Peter Perella & Co.



Nominated by: Margie Lockwood, Illinois Bell, 65 W. Webster, Joliet, IL 60431, 815/727-8069

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Community Classroom
Founded by
Illinois Bell, Herald News, Caterpillar, Olin Chemicals
Joined by
AT&T Communications, Commonwealth Edison,
Economics Laboratory, First National Bank of Joliet,
Joyce Beverages, Mobil Oil Corporation
St. Joseph's Medical Center, First Midwest Bank

"Dignity of Work" reaches nearly 3,000 youth each year through the Community Classroom—a commitment starting its 17th year.

Perhaps one of the best untold stories in the educational annals of Illinois is that of Community Classroom. Here's a program that involves dozens of businesses, hundreds of employees and thousands of students. Not only is the involvement high, the cost low and the impact indisputable, but the project has not been a flashy short-term program whose glory quickly waned. The faces of employees change, the participating businesses change and a new crop of young people arrive at work sites every year, but Community Classroom continues . . . and it's been that way for 17 years.

Illinois Bell takes the business of education very seriously. We know that the quality of the existing labor force is a major consideration in attracting and retaining business in Illinois. Our educational efforts are, therefore, in the interest of long-term economic growth in our state.

—Excerpt from one session of Community Classroom

Concern for Dropout Rate

It all began in 1970-71 when area educators approached the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry for help. Their problem was an alarming dropout rate. They felt that young people needed to see the advantages of a high school diploma and the relevance of their total education to the work world. As a result, Illinois Bell, Herald-News, Caterpillar, and Olin Chemicals founded the Community Classroom concept. It was unique. It was effective. It had a "pay-off" for everyone. And it still does.

Businesses have "adopted" Dirksen, Gompers, Hufford and Washington junior high schools.

They do not sell companies, careers or products. But what they try to sell is the importance of education, the value and dignity of work, the proper work attitudes and ethics and the learning process that extends past the diploma and throughout an individual's work life.

--Excerpt from Herald News Local Report, June 4, 1984

Illinois Bell Telephone has been sponsoring a junior high community classroom program for the past sixteen years. There are two main purposes to this program. One is to give students at this age an opportunity to see and learn about different types of careers and professions. Secondly, the trips provide students with some "hands-on experience" in a variety of occupations at Bell. It is hoped that this experience will aid students in more intelligent decision making for a future career.

The students learned interviewing techniques in the classroom to gain a better knowledge of how to find out about people and their occupations.

—Wilmington Advocate, May 3, 1985

Students Talk to Employees

In Community Classroom, one or two junior high classes arrive at a business site, are divided into small guided groups and are taken to 4-8 different job locations. That's where the differences between a traditional tour and Community Classroom begin. Once at a particular work station, the students talk with employees. These work station demonstrators know exactly what their role is in the program: they briefly discuss their jobs, give the students work tasks and answer their questions. The young people are eager to weld steel, splice telephone wires, perform lab tests, mix syrups for soda, operate computers, repair vending machines and test metals for dangerous electrical charges.

Students are well-prepared by their teachers at school. Business representatives visit the class before Community Classroom to provide an overview of the business and "stir up" student anticipation. In Joliet the following businesses have been involved: AT&T Communications Inc., Amoco Chemicals Co., Caterpillar, Commonwealth Edison, Economics Laboratory, First National Bank of Joliet, Herald-News, Illinois Bell, Joyce Beverages, Mobil Oil Corp., Olin Chemicals, St. Joseph's Medical Center, and First Midwest Bank. Illinois Bell alone hosts 600

Community Classroom students each year and annually involves 40-60 employees. On a city-wide basis, hundreds of workers have direct contact with thousands of students each year, exposing them to hundreds of career opportunities. Add to this impact, the 16 Springfield businesses who touch approximately 2,000 youngsters with career information and the other businesses doing Community Classroom in Decatur and Morris.

Real life interview situations enable students to develop and expand their listening and interviewing skills. These communication skills are useful to students all their lives.

—Robert Siemmen, Principal, Gompers Junior High School, Joliet, IL

Attitudes and Ethics

In addition to career information, these businesses "sell" the value and dignity of work to these young people. The students leave our business sites with a better appreciation of work attitudes and ethics. They know the importance of their education in the work world and the doors opened with a high school diploma. We think it's made a great difference in our dropout rate in Joliet. The student evaluation forms consistently have innumerable comments made to open-ended questions professing the "new found revelation" of the value of education. With a socioeconomic climate much like Chicago's, our dropout rate is approximately half that of the city's.

Their on-the-job experience has given new found excitement and relevance to school work.

—Ed Kreis, Teacher and Advisory Council Member, Hufford Junior High School, Joliet, IL

The children's excitement and anticipation when we start the tour is contagious and I find myself learning along with them.

—Charles H. Bozue, Manager-Construction/I&M-Lockport

Business Commitment

From a business point of view, the program demands a large time commitment to begin. However, once in place it takes on a life of its own and our personnel feel individually rewarded. Illinois Bell has been the catalyst and the model for Community Classroom in other Illinois cities. Now, we've put together a coordinator's aid and training package to ease program replication.

Community Classroom—it's proven its value—it works.

Everything was extremely well-planned, interesting and very informative. The Bell employees made each child in the group feel special, which I thought was so important.

—Mrs. Voudrie, Parent Chaperone

Illinois Bell's Community Classroom

This program is being submitted for national recognition.

Nominated by: Margie Lockwood, Illinois Bell, 65 West Webster, Joliet, Illinois 60431

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Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education we express the following:

CONGRATULATIONS to those who were identified as successful

- Vocational education students
- Private sector individuals, businesses, industries, labor organizations, and community groups
- Teachers, administrators, guidance counselors
- Public sector individuals, councils, and agencies
- Providers for targeted populations

ESTEEM for Governor Thompson who, on behalf of the citizens of Illinois, expressed appreciation and congratulations to those who achieved and contributed to success in vocational education.

THANK YOU TO:

- Persons submitting nominations for providing the success stories used in this publication and for organizing supporting information.
- Nominees for completing our questionnaires. Your responses were valuable.
- Individuals writing letters of support for testimonials which contributed information for use in this publication.

OUR APPRECIATION TO:

- Word Processing and Graphic Arts, Illinois State Board of Education, for typesetting, design and graphics work for this publication.
- Printing, Illinois State Board of Education, for printing the ICoVE Recognition Program publications.
- Purchasing, Illinois State Board of Education, for securing supplies needed for publication.

OUR GRATITUDE TO:

- Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Illinois State Board of Education, for enrollment data, financial information, and project reports used to supplement ICoVE's information for this publication.
- Illinois Community College Board for enrollment and program information used to supplement ICoVE's information for this report.
- Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee for securing employment, demographic, and other information used in this report.

Ronald C. Morehead
ICoVE Chair, 1985-86

Rep. Gordon Ropp
ICoVE Chair, 1986-87

Awards Committee
Robert Beckwith
Marilyn Kushak
Rep. Gordon Ropp

Private Sector Initiatives Committee
Dr. Joseph Piland
Consuelo Williams

Targeted Populations Committee
Jesse Rios
Valee Salone

Dropout Committee
Hartzel Black
Marie Malinauskas

Legislative Mandates

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICoVE) was established by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984. The thirteen-member council was appointed by Governor Thompson to fulfill mandates set forth in this federal legislation. Activities required of the Council include the following:

1. Conduct public hearings on vocational education.
2. Meet with and advise the Illinois State Board of Education on the development of a State Plan for Vocational Education.
3. Advise the Illinois State Board of Education and report to the Governor of Illinois, the business community, and the general public concerning:
    a. Policies needed in Illinois to strengthen vocational education programs, giving attention to programs for the handicapped;
    b. Ways the private sector can help to modernize vocational education programs.
4. Analyze and report on how money for vocational education programs is distributed and used.
5. Analyze and report on the availability of needed vocational education activities and services throughout Illinois.
6. Consult with the Illinois State Board of Education on evaluation criteria for vocational education programs in Illinois.
7. Recommend to the Illinois State Board of Education how business concerns and labor organizations can best be used in vocational education programs.
8. Assess how federal funds support secondary and postsecondary vocational education programs.
9. Recommend to the Illinois State Board of Education how the public, particularly local employers and local labor organizations, can be involved in providing vocational education in local schools.
10. Report to the Illinois State Board of Education about equal access to quality vocational education programs for special populations such as handicapped, disadvantaged, limited-English speakers, single parents, adults needing training, criminal offenders, homemakers needing training.
11. Evaluate and then report ICoVE's findings and recommendations to the Governor of Illinois, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Job Training Coordinating Council, the U.S. Secretary of Education, and the U.S. Secretary of Labor about:
    a. The adequacy and effectiveness of vocational education and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs in preparing Illinois citizens for employment, as required by federal legislation;
    b. Coordination between vocational education and JTPA.
12. Help the Illinois State Board of Education establish technical committees from the private sector to develop lists of skills needed by workers in today's occupations.

Illinois Council on Vocational Education

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PERMIT No. 925

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Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois
August 1987 3M 7-200B-78 No. 129